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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY USSR (Chkalov Oblast)

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SUBJECT ^{25X1} Airfield and Aircraft Plant at Chkalov

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1. The airfield was about 10 km northeast of the Red Square in Chkalov (55° 41'N/51°46'E), Chkalov Oblast, about 8 km from the Oksnara River. A cemetery was 1 to 2 km southeast of the field.
2. Only "a few low barracks buildings, possibly aircraft sheds" were seen at the field. An aircraft plant was on the southern edge of the field.
3. There was intensive flying over the town between mid-1947 and January 1949.
 - a. Parachuting from two twin-engine transports, about 20 paratroopers jumping from each plane, was daily observed, also in the winter months.
 - b. Cargo gliders, in groups of two towed by one plane, were often seen in the air after 1948. The practices started after nightfall.
 - c. Fighters and twin-engine aircraft flying in formations of 9 or 15 planes were observed every day.

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4. An about 5-km road led from the Red Square in LNK direction to a so-called pilot school, a five-story building.
 5. The airfield was about 1 km from the northeastern town perimeter of Chkalov. Aircraft plant [] was on the southern edge of the field.
 6. The about 1 x 2-km landing field had a firm grass cover. No runways or taxiways were seen. The field surroundings were free of obstacles.
 7. Two hangars with vaulted roofs and quarters for flying personnel were observed on the southern edge of the landing field.
 8. Flying was done with biplanes and single-engine aircraft towing cargo gliders.

Description of towing planes: High-wing monoplane, in-line engine, length of fuselage 10 to 12 meters, wing span 8 to 10 meters, cross section of fuselage oval and noticeably bulky.

The cargo gliders had an estimated capacity of 10 to 12 men. They were towed to an altitude of 400 meters and then made short gliding flights.

Larger aircraft were also observed, from each of which 7 or 8 parachutists would jump.

9. The airfield was about 1 km northeast of Chkalov, south of the railroad line and road to Orsk (58°35'N, 51°12'E). An aircraft plant with a spur track was in the southern section of the field.
10. The field, about 2 km square, had no hard-surface runways. The following installations were available:
 - a. Four hangars, brick and steel structures with vaulted roofs.
 - b. A weather station.
 - c. A four-story stone building serving as quarters for flying personnel.
 - d. A garage, a 15 x 40-meter stone building, for about 20 tank trucks.The field had boundary lights.
11. Three five-story brick buildings in the western section of the town served as quarters for air force personnel. The soldiers wore gold epaulets with the No 321 or 324.
12. A radio station of two four-story brick buildings (15 x 15 x 30 meters) and six to eight 20-meter radio masts was about 3 km northeast of the field.
13. The field was occupied by twin-engine aircraft, biplanes and cargo gliders.
14. Parachute jumps were made individually and in groups of up to 20 men from twin-engine planes.
15. Other airfields were some distance from Chkalov.
16. The airfield, 2 km square, with an aircraft plant was northeast of Chkalov,

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1 to 1½ km south of the main road to Orsk. The field had a railroad connection.

17. There were no runways or taxiways. Four hangars were in the southern section of the field. The field personnel were quartered in barracks in the town, except for the test pilots who were quartered in a building in the aircraft plant area. Underground fuel installations were in the southwest corner of the field and a weather station in the northwest corner. There were red boundary lamps 60 centimeters above the ground.
18. A radio station was 2½ to 3 km east of the field.
19. Flying with cargo gliders (towed start) and continuous parachute jumping (mostly in groups) were observed.
20. There were more airfields near Chkalov, some distance from the town.

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Comment:

- a. Report confirms and supplements the previous assumption that the airfield is occupied by parachute and air landing units.* In addition to a parachute school giving initial training up to formation flying and a cargo glider pilot school, a parachute and air landing unit seems to be stationed in Chkalov.
- b. The about 2-km square airfield provided with night lighting facilities and radio installations is obviously suitable for day, night and all-weather flying.
- c. From repeated indications it is inferred that other airfields, some of them occupied by fighters, are near Chkalov.

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